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ABSTRACT

This document was prepared to promote the development of policies at the school, college, and university levels that ensure that students learn English at the levels required to benefit optimally from their studies. It presents statewide demographic data on California's limited English language speaking students and recommendations for future curriculum planning. The first sections present background on California's non-native English population, including statewide demographics, school data, and economic and workplace data. These sections indicate that an estimated 5% of California's population is limited in their English proficiency and a projected 250,000 foreign immigrants are expected to enter California annually through the year 2000. The number of K-12 students classified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) was 652,439 in 1988, approximately double the 1980 number. Between 1977 and 1987, Hispanic student enrollment in the state's community colleges increased from 8.8% to 15%, and Asian student enrollment increased from 4.7% to 9.7%. In fall 1987, the overall freshmen pass-rate on the California State University's English Placement Test was 43.5%, but only 28.6% for Hispanic freshmen and 19.6% for Asian freshmen. The bulk of the report consists of recommendations for an intersegmental English as a Second Language (ESL) Agenda. These recommendations focus on: (1) expectations of freshman language competencies; (2) standards for student language performance levels; (3) coordinated and articulated assessment policies; (4) issues in the assignment of baccalaureate credit and intersegmental transfer; (5) visibility and status of programs for LEP students; (6) in-service and pre-service preparation of all California to teach LEP students; and (7) statewide priorities and planning. (WJT)

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CALIFORNIA'S LIMITED ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENTS: AN INTERSEGMENTAL AGENDA

A Report to the Intersegmental Coordinating Council

from the

Curriculum and Assessment Cluster Committee

Sally Casanova, Chair
Rita Cepeda, Vice Chair
Sue Bennett
Dale Carlson
Hal Charnofsky
Phil Daro
Karen Merritt
Leann Parker
Susan Petit
Linda White
Jill Wilson

September 1989
(Revised)

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Sally Loyd Casanova, Chair	California State University
Rita Cepeda, Vice-Chair	California Community Colleges
Dale Carlson	State Department of Education
Hal Charnofsky	California State University
Phil Daro	University of California
Karen Merritt	University of California
Susan Petit	California Community Colleges
Linda Barton White	California Postsecondary Education Commission
Jill Wilson	Intersegmental Coordinating Council

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California's Limited English Language Students: An Intersegmental Agenda

With a speed that would astonish most Californians, the State has become home to a very large population of limited English speaking youth, both immigrant and native-born. Nearly one in three California school children now comes from a family where English is not the primary language, and 29 percent of school-age children report that a language other than English is spoken at home. As many as one in six public school students is an immigrant. In some elementary school districts, the proportion of students classified as limited in their English proficiency is approaching 70 percent. The implications for the State's schools, colleges, and universities are long-term and unprecedented in American education. The scope and importance of these changes to all California institutions, including the schools, is so profound as to call for educational approaches that are as yet unimagined.

One of the prerequisites to creating such approaches is to ensure that the State's entire academic community becomes fully aware of the long-term educational transformations called for by these facts. Every school, college, and university in California has been or will be affected. The shifting population promises to provide the State and its institutions with enormous human and cultural enrichment. In return, the State and its educational institutions have an obligation to this population. The transcendent issue for all the State's segments of education is to ensure that students entering at any grade, including the university level, attain proficiency in English with sufficient speed so that their long-term progression through the educational system is not impaired. The State must ensure that its educational system produces graduates who will be able to participate fully in the State's workforce, be able to continue producing the innovations that have made the State economically competitive, and be able to support the civic and social structures that keep society intact.

The Curriculum and Assessment Committee of the Intersegmental Coordinating Council is concerned that:

- School, college, and university policies and programs have not been implemented with sufficient speed to ensure that students learn English at the levels required to benefit optimally from their studies. As a result, limited English speaking students are being channeled into unnecessarily restricted career and citizenship paths.

- Limited proficiency in English is a significant factor contributing to students dropping out at all levels of education.

- Immigrant students are not sufficiently represented in the eligibility pools of the University of California and The California State University, and limited proficiency in English and associated drop-out rates probably contribute significantly to this underrepresentation. Without sweeping action, California's university eligibility pools will continue to be affected by the changing linguistic capabilities of the K-12 school population.

- Each segment of education is sending students along to the next level of education without well-defined and widely accepted standards for proficiency in writing and in speaking. Though time in English courses is required, the proficiency requirements or expectations for high school diplomas, associate

degrees, bachelor's degrees, and graduate degrees are defined and assessed inadequately at best. Universities continue to treat students of limited English ability as "foreign" students who will have no need to function as professionals, scholars, and citizens in this country.

- The need to provide basic English instruction to immigrants of all ages has been so enormous (particularly in relation to the amnesty program) that the "English as a Second Language (ESL) agenda" has focused on the attainment of basic skills throughout the population, rather than on the attainment of the higher level proficiency required for success in advanced education and in the professions.

Involving students of limited English ability fully in the State's economic, social, and political sectors will require explicit educational recognition and reform. In particular, the agendas of Academic Senates, governing boards, the State Department of Education and local school districts, segmental and intersegmental committees, and the like, must incorporate the issues raised here. This brief overview is intended to serve by itself to underscore the importance of the issue, and it is intended also to serve as an introduction to the following issue paper prepared by the Curriculum and Assessment Committee in consultation with a panel of ESL experts.

In this report the Committee on Curriculum and Assessment has attempted to use terminology that is neutral yet clearly expressive of its intent. This has been difficult because of the lack of a common vocabulary among segments. The pedagogical and political baggage associated with such terms as "English as a Second Language," "Limited English Proficient," "Non-native speaker," and "English only" probably have impeded meaningful intersegmental action.

Non-Native English Population

Background

The non-native English speaking population in California not only is increasing but will continue growing well into the 21st century. The results of this growth are significant for all levels of the education continuum and for the well-being and strength of the economy.

A first step in addressing the educational and societal consequences of this population change is to promote greater awareness of the special learning needs of non-native English speakers. In particular, the educational leadership represented on the Intersegmental Coordinating Council, the Round Table, and the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates needs to be familiar with language census data, student enrollment data, and data showing the link between the preparation of non-native English speaking students and the needs of the workplace. This paper provides some base data taken from the sources listed in the bibliography. These data portray an incontrovertible picture of expanding need for instruction in English for non-native speakers.

State Demographic Data

Because data on the numbers of non-native English speakers in California are not systematically collected, they must be inferred. Many of the statements below assume that most Hispanic and Asian immigrants enter the State with limited if any English skills. It is

also assumed that ethnicity data, which are collected, can point to the presence of limited English proficient populations. It is not assumed that ethnicity can serve as a proxy for limited English proficiency.

- The 1980 census estimated the total California population to be 23, 667,902. Five percent of this population, or 1,252,724 individuals, were estimated to be limited in their English proficiency.
- Between 1990 and 2000, the population of California is projected by the population unit of the Department of Finance to increase by four million people at the rate of 400,000 per year. The Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy suggests that the total increase may be six million during this period, or 600,000 a year.
- Half of the yearly increase of 400,000 will be due to natural increases (births minus deaths) and half will be due to people moving to California.
- The Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy projects 250,000 foreign immigrants entering California annually to the year 2000.
- Immigration patterns for this state indicate that the great majority of foreign immigrants (90%) are either Asian or Hispanic.
- Since 1982, California has been the destination for over 30% of the new-arrival refugees to the United States. Of these new refugees, 75% were from Southeast Asia.
- Between 1982 and 1985, about 60,000 new refugees who came first to other States resettled in California (secondary migration). More than 40% of these new refugees were under age 18.
- The Hispanic population will increase at the most rapid rate. The percentage will rise from 21% in 1985 to over 28% in 2005. Some of this will be due to immigration and secondary migration, suggesting continued increases in the number of non-native English speakers.
- Asians/Native Americans/Pacific Islanders and other related minority groups represented about 8.5% of the population in 1985. Over the next twenty years, this percentage is projected to be over 12.5%. As with the Hispanic population, some of this increase will be due to immigration and secondary migration, and will probably result in an increase in the number of non-native English speakers.

School Data

Public Schools (K-12)

- The number of students classified by California public schools as Limited English Proficient (LEP) has doubled over an eight year period, from 325,748 in 1980 to 652,439 in 1988.
- The largest increases between 1984 and 1988, were among those whose primary language was Spanish, a group which increased by over 33 percent (now 475,001 students); Cambodian, which increased by over 105 percent (now 17,274 students); Farsi, which increased by 121 percent (now 4,564 students); and Hmong, which increased by 106 percent (now 13,311 students).

Postsecondary Education

The Commission to Review the Master Plan for Higher Education recognized that special efforts would need to be made if recent immigrants were to pursue college degrees. In its 1988 report, The Master Plan Renewed, the commission recommended that the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) "establish a task force to study, evaluate, and make recommendations to the segments regarding the development of effective ESL programs." Each of the public postsecondary segments has recognized that the needs for ESL instruction have been increasing, and as charged by the Master Plan Commission, UC and CSU have taken steps to "assure the effective articulation, coordination, and quality of English as a Second Language programs."

Language census enrollment data are not consistently maintained by the public postsecondary institutions, but some data are available.

- The Community Colleges have experienced steady increases in demand for ESL courses. Though data are not collected on non-native English speakers, the increase in demand for ESL courses is probably associated with increases in the number of students who identify themselves as Asian or Hispanic. In the ten-year period between 1977 and 1987, Hispanic student enrollment in the Community Colleges increased from 8.8 percent (115,065) to 15 percent (189,661). During that same period, enrollment of Asian students increased from 4.7 percent (60,858) to 9.7 percent (122,648).
- A 1985-86 survey by The California State University revealed that enrollment in English as a Second Language courses totaled more than 11,000 (a figure which includes visa students and may double count students enrolled in more than one course).
- The overall freshman pass-rate for The California State University's English Placement Test in fall 1987 was 43.5 percent. For Hispanic freshmen, the pass rate was 28.6 percent and for Asian freshmen, the pass rate was 19.6 percent. These results are thought to be related to the fact that some of the Hispanic and Asian students are non-native English speakers.
- Between the 1987 and 1988 administrations of the University of California's Subject A exam, the number of non-native English speakers not passing increased from 933 (6.7 percent of all test takers) to 1,261 (8.4 percent of all test takers) in one year alone. In May 1987, one-half of the monolingual population passed, but only one-third of the bilingual population passed, even though the bilingual students had attended U.S. schools an average of 9-11 years and were in the top 12 percent of the high school graduating class.

Economy and Workplace

- It is estimated that between 1983 and 1991, 2.6 million jobs will have been added to the California economy.
- These jobs will require greater verbal skills than ever before, whether or not they are jobs requiring college degrees. In other words, students and employers will be best served if all high school graduates reach at least the level of language proficiency required for success in collegiate study.

- Between 1982 and 1995, the percentage of new and/or replacement jobs requiring higher education is expected to climb from 35 percent to 46 percent. Therefore, the general educational level of Californians will need to advance simply to support the evolving economy.
- The Rand Corporation estimates that an increasing portion of new jobs will be filled by immigrant and/or non-native English speakers.
- Relatively high drop-out rates for non-native English speakers mean that educated workers may not be available in the numbers required if efforts are not made to remedy that portion of the drop-out problem caused by English deficiencies.

Recommendations for an Intersegmental ESL Agenda

Working with ESL experts (listed at the end of this report), the Curriculum and Assessment Committee proposes the intersegmental actions described on the following pages.

Freshman Expectations

The value of the intersegmental freshman expectation statements developed by the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates has already been demonstrated. They contribute not only to the subsequent development of intersegmental curriculum projects, but also to progress on articulation, transfer, and assessment. These statements are most effective when linked with the Frameworks published by the State Department of Education. Recent documents published by SDE [English Language Arts Framework (1987); Foreign Language Framework (1989); Effective Language Arts Programs for Chapter 1 and Migrant Education Students (1989)] describe effective support systems and instructional programs for limited English proficient students. However, comparable statements have not yet been developed for the postsecondary level.

Though progress has been made, there is still some confusion about the application of the freshman expectation statements to non-native English speaking students. This confusion could be resolved either by incorporating competencies for non-native speakers into all existing and future statements, or by preparing a separate supplemental statement of competency for non-native speakers that better addresses those language proficiency needs unique to this population. In the interests of time the Curriculum and Assessment Committee believes that a supplement to current statements in all fields would be the fastest, most effective way of drawing attention to the need for all non-native English speakers to be prepared adequately for collegiate study before they graduate from high school. The supplement would be serve as an interim document until the competency expectations in language could be incorporated into all future freshman expectation statements.

1. **It is recommended that the Intersegmental Coordinating Council request the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates to develop a statement of language competencies for non-native speakers of English that would serve as a supplement to all existing competency statements for entering freshmen, and would be incorporated into all future competency statements. The English competency statement that now exists is necessary but not sufficient to convey to high school students and teachers the oral communication, reading, and**

comprehension skills that are necessary for non-native English speakers to be successful in baccalaureate level courses.

Student Performance Levels

The ESL consultants noted that while taxonomies exist to describe skill levels of non-native English speakers, there is no standardization within or among segments. They recommended that the segments agree on a definition of performance levels which could be incorporated into the competency expectations.

There is a model for describing language proficiency levels in the Statement on Competencies in Languages Other than English (Phase I, French, German, Spanish; December 1986). This statement could provide a useful beginning for describing competencies in the English language skills required for successful baccalaureate study: "the creative ability to use that language in unrehearsed situations in culturally appropriate ways. . . .The skills to be developed include the categories of comprehension (listening and reading), production (conversation, writing), and cultural awareness, as well as vocabulary control and language accuracy" (page 4).

In defining language performance levels, consideration should also be given to such resources as the proficiency levels developed by Omaggio and the ACTFL.

2. **As the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates oversees the preparation of a supplementary freshman competency statement for non-native English speakers which will be incorporated into all future statements, it should ask the drafting committee to identify or develop a description of language performance levels that could be commonly recognized by all California institutions.**

Assessment

Assessment policies of all segments need to ensure fair, equitable, and educationally sound treatment of non-native English speaking students. The ICC may wish to urge segmental attention to assessment policies that affect non-native English speakers, but there are also some intersegmental assessment agendas. If the identification and labeling of students requiring instruction in English as a Second Language leads to their separation from the general student population, the dilution of their instruction in the separate content areas, and instructional techniques limited to low-level, mechanical basic skills, it may be doing more harm than good. This assessment issue deserves intersegmental consideration. There is also a need for the articulation of ESL tests with other assessment practices used across the segments.

3. **The Curriculum and Assessment Committee of the Intersegmental Coordinating Council has been charged by the ICC with developing a model for articulating and strengthening the coherence or continuum of testing as students proceed through the educational process. The articulation of ESL tests should be explicitly included in this charge.** (Note: the subcommittee undertaking the development of this model has been asked to include ESL assessment, so this recommendation is already being implemented.)

4. **After the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates has completed its supplementary competency statement and agreement has been reached on standards for performance levels, the Curriculum and Assessment Committee of the Intersegmental Coordinating Council should be charged by the ICC with coordinating the selection or development of assessment instruments that would measure the performance levels identified in the freshman competency supplement.**

5. **Academic Senates should be asked to consider, segmentally and intersegmentally, the appropriate course placement levels resulting from the above assessments. The State Department of Education and the Academic Senates should be asked to consider ways of aiding students in meeting the identified performance levels so that non-native English speakers do not have to spend time after high school graduation in coursework that does not carry baccalaureate credit.**

Course Level: Issues in the Assignment of Baccalaureate Credit and Intersegmental Transfer

Each segment and campus has unique policies on the differentiation of remedial and baccalaureate courses, and these differences have created some difficulties in the transfer of ESL courses among institutions and segments. A second difficulty has been created by the fact that many high school and college students have to spend considerable time in ESL courses that do not count toward a degree. An initial year or more of "remediation" is so discouraging that most colleges and universities allow students to enroll in college-level courses (except English composition) from the outset, and hope that students "catch up" in English as they progress.

Recent reports issued by the CSU and the UC address some of these problems. The California State University Academic Senate in May 1989 endorsed the recommendations of the California State University Workgroup on English as a Second Language, which contained policy recommendations on baccalaureate credit, transfer, and articulation. The University of California has for more than three years had a special committee preparing a report detailing ESL policy recommendations. This report, which was accepted in March by the UC Committee on Undergraduate Preparatory and Remedial Education, has been forwarded to the Academic Council. In addition, the UC has introduced special readings of ESL papers at systemwide Subject A scoring sessions as a means of identifying and placing ESL students. However, lack of common performance levels and vocabularies continues to impede progress toward achieving intersegmental agreement.

The development of freshman competency statements and the identification of performance levels, as already recommended, should improve articulation and should reduce the amount of language instruction needed by many freshman non-native speakers. Such progress of course assumes that school districts will review their graduation proficiency requirements to ensure that the graduation competency standards are set at a level that will correspond more closely to the proposed freshman competency expectations.

An important step in considering equitable and educationally defensible credit and transfer policy is to promote understanding about what is done in ESL courses and to inform the academic community about the level of English proficiency that is reached by students completing those courses. Reluctance to allow ESL courses to satisfy requirements for English composition courses is due to the fact that the English proficiency level of a student

completing an ESL course is usually less than the proficiency of a student completing a college-level English composition course. However, ESL courses , whether or not they are designated as "English," could be designed to be baccalaureate level, thereby helping students to advance to their degree goals without delaying them for a year or more.

There are ways to minimize delays. Because they are usually proficient in their native language, ESL students have a potential asset that is highly valued in the academy. If ESL students were given the opportunity to receive credit by examination in baccalaureate-level foreign language courses in their native languages, many such students could probably earn--through assessment--up to six units of baccalaureate foreign language credit. The equivalent time spent in ESL courses would then not represent time lost, but rather an appropriate tradeoff in terms of each student's educational needs and educational assets.

Recent work undertaken by the CSU English as a Second Language Workgroup (June 1988) provides another possible model for intersegmental consideration. It suggests that baccalaureate-level ESL courses might satisfy--or might be designed to satisfy--college-level requirements in oral communication or foreign language. With this model, the ESL course would itself be regarded and credited as the academic equivalent of a beginning speech course or a beginning foreign language course taken by a native-English speaker.

6. **The Transfer and Articulation Committee of the Intersegmental Coordinating Council should be asked to monitor the progress of proposed articulation and transfer of ESL courses. The Cluster should be asked to consider the recommendations of the CSU Workgroup, or to suggest ways in which credit by assessment for native language could be articulated.**

Visibility and Status of Programs for Non-Native English Speakers

Programs to teach non-native speakers of English suffer nearly everywhere from lack of definition, coordination, and visibility. This is probably because they have been regarded as "temporary," needed only until the current cohort of immigrants was through school. In the California State University and the University of California, many ESL programs were initially established to serve foreign visa students, and were (and are) sometimes seen as a kind of "student service" for international students. In the Community Colleges, ESL programs often have been seen primarily as student support services rather than as academic offerings.

At the postsecondary level ESL courses are offered in a variety of departments, including English, Foreign Languages, Communications, Speech, and even in the Extension and Adult Education Divisions. As a result, while there are growing numbers of ESL faculty, they are predominantly seen as temporary. This status means that ESL issues and concerns do not have the visibility on campus that similar issues related to established academic disciplines and departments have. Institutions wishing to establish ESL study committees often have no permanent faculty with academic expertise in the area, and the avenues usually open to faculty members to raise issues on their own campuses--namely through the Faculty Senate and other standing faculty committees--are not readily available to ESL faculty. Claims on campus resources are diminished when the authority of an academic department is missing. The ESL workgroup of The California State University recently recommended that "school deans and department chairs, as appropriate, should take steps to ensure the participation of a core of [tenure-track] faculty in their ESL programs" (p. 10). There is a need for all campuses to recognize and address appropriately the problems created when ESL programs and instructional staff lack visibility and status. Similar

problems exist in those public schools which have treated these programs as auxiliary services rather than as a fundamental part of the core curriculum.

The effective teaching of non-native English speakers requires a body of knowledge which includes special expertise in the field of language acquisition. A growing body of evidence suggests that 1) all institutions should be concerned that those teaching these courses have the relevant academic preparation; and 2) the relevant academic preparation should be available in California's universities.

7. **Administrative and faculty representatives to the Intersegmental Coordinating Council and to its cluster committees should provide leadership in re-examining, within their segments, the adequacy of existing segmental and campus academic and curricular structures to meet the growing needs for effective instruction of non-native English speakers. Such re-examination should include consideration of the qualifications of faculty who teach these courses. In the University of California and the California State University, such re-examination should include consideration of the need for programs to prepare teachers of non-native English speakers for all educational levels.**

8. **The Intersegmental Coordinating Council should ask the Cluster Committee on Improvement of Teaching to examine the State's future need for faculty to teach non-native English speaking students at all levels; consider whether adequate preparation programs exist; and make recommendations about needed changes in the numbers of faculty and/or the kinds of preparation available to and received by such faculty. In considering these questions, the Cluster Committee on Improvement of Teaching should be asked to consider the CATESOL Statement on Teacher Preparation at the Community College Level, June, 1988.**

In-Service and Pre-Service Preparation of All California Faculty to Teach Non-Native English Speakers

California's greatest and largest resource for helping non-native English speakers achieve targeted levels of competence in composition and oral communication is its entire K-12, college, and university faculty. Nearly all of these faculty members are facing classes of increasing numbers of non-native English speakers, and few if any have been prepared to teach such classes effectively--much less to develop the English skills of non-native speakers within the context of the subject being taught. There have been some model programs around the State, but the Curriculum and Assessment Committee believes there is a need to consider a range of options which would lead to the rapid integration in as many of California's classrooms as possible of something that might be called "ESL Across the Curriculum." Such a massive effort might include:

- -In-service education for faculty at all levels, perhaps through disciplinary channels;
- -Dissemination of information on effective second language teaching methodologies and current research in second language acquisition;
- -Awareness and dissemination of information to institutional administrators;
- -Provision of opportunities for classroom-based research.

There are several possible vehicles for such a massive effort. A California project, modeled on--or part of--the California Writing Project, is a possibility. (The California Writing Project and the California Literature Project have already recognized the need for special strategies for teaching writing to non-native English speakers and have begun to work on this issue.) It might also be promising--and novel--for California's faculty leaders

to work with relevant professional disciplinary associations to promote the development and dissemination of successful strategies for teaching English to non-native speakers within the context of the discipline.

9. **The Intersegmental Coordinating Council should ask the Committee on Improvement of Teaching to work with the Committee on Curriculum and Assessment to recommend implementation strategies for California faculty development efforts, with particular emphasis on providing California's faculty with effective ways of improving the English communication skills of non-native English speakers within the context of all disciplines being taught. If feasible, this activity should begin in 1989-90 and should be coordinated with faculty development projects undertaken within the provisions of SB 1882.**

Statewide Priorities and Planning

Insufficiently funded programs and inadequately prepared faculty are making it difficult for non-native speaking students in every segment to achieve native-like proficiency in English. None of the above actions will fully address this problem. The recommended actions are achievable, but they will be less effective than a well financed, highly organized, and visible statewide effort to ensure that non-native English speakers in California's educational institutions reach a level of competence that will enable them to achieve full benefit from their education and function at fully productive levels, realizing their potential, in the workforce. If California wishes to achieve these results, then more dramatic actions are necessary.

Logic dictates that the sooner students master English composition and communication at a level approaching native-like proficiency, the more they will benefit from all subsequent education. An educational process that provides second language instruction on the side, as students move along through the educational pipeline, denies those students the full benefit of education--yet this is the way the system generally operates, both at the K-12 and at the postsecondary levels. Similarly, while we know that intensive language instruction works, we rarely provide it in large doses.

But while logic dictates a change of the curricular structure, equity concerns suggest that it be approached cautiously. There are compelling reasons for not labeling and segregating students, and for not holding them in courses that are all too often identified or perceived as "remedial" until they can work their way out of these courses. This approach is so unacceptable that what might otherwise have been a rational curricular approach has been appropriately rejected in California. The Curriculum and Assessment Committee believes that there are ways of being sensitive to equity concerns while providing new kinds of programs that can work. Moreover, such approaches could be uniquely susceptible to intersegmental planning and operation. The committee believes that the problem is so compelling that experimental model programs should be attempted.

For example, voluntary summer intensive language institutes could be operated jointly by the University of California, The California State University, the California Community Colleges, and the public schools. Such intensive language institutes could be open without charge to any California student at any of the campuses. Such institutes would not need to offer academic credit, would not need to differentiate students by grade level, and would not need to grade students. Believing that most students want to achieve the most benefit possible from their education, we suspect that such incentives as academic credit and grades are unnecessary for large numbers of students. Other, similar experimental

programs should be conceived by those most familiar with effective ways of teaching non-native speakers of English.

10. California cannot afford to wait for the inevitable delays in implementing all of the programs recommended above. The Intersegmental Coordinating Council should establish an intersegmental task force, possibly assigned to the Curriculum and Assessment Committee, to begin designing some model experimental intersegmental programs to bring non-native English speakers as rapidly as possible to a level of proficiency that will ensure maximum benefit from their subsequent education.

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ESL Panel Members
for
Presentation to ICC Curriculum and Assessment Committee

Alice Addison
Santa Maria Joint Union High School District
Arroyo Grande, CA

Saeed Ali
Glendale Community College
Glendale, CA

Gari Browning
Orange Coast College
Costa Mesa, CA

Marianne Celce-Murcia
University of California, Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA

Ignacio de Carrillo
Los Angeles Unified School District
Los Angeles, CA

Katheryn Garlow
Palomar Community College
San Marcos, CA

Denise Murray
San Jose State University
San Jose, CA

Steve Ross
California State University, Long Beach
Long Beach, CA

G.T. (Tippy) Schwabe
University of California, Davis
Davis, CA

Sharon Seymour
Alemany Community College Center
San Francisco, CA

Ken Simms
Office of the Chancellor
California State University
Long, Beach, CA

Stephen Sloan
Los Angeles Unified School District
Los Angeles, CA

The Intersegmental Coordinating Council
501 L Street, Suite 101
Sacramento, California 95814

(916) 324-8593

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